THE AERONAUT.

No. 60. July. 9. 1817.

He's armed without, that's innocent within.
POPE.

=

The sarcasms of malevolence, and the surmises of suspicion, though directed often upon the wrong object, are the necessary attendants upon individuals, as consequences of the general wreck of human hopes, human glory, and human enjoyment. Though hushed at the grave, they close not in life; tire with the mul-

tipliciy of their accusations, and provoke with the frequency of their observations.

Horace takes occasion, in one of his epistles, to remark upon the supreme felicity of him, who at his birth and his departure, has few, to smile with gladness at the one, or lament the misfortune of the other; who comes into the world and leaves it, unnoticed, and therefore unmolested, unknown, and therefore unregarded. Perhaps this observation is, in a great part, if not altogether, true. The gloom of solitary life, is a paradise of pleasure, to vexation at public ingratitude, and anguish through public revenge. The prospect of a depopulated state of being, would be welcome to the mariner over an ocean of peril, tossed by conflicting tempests,

driven by desolating storms, the spent of the winds, the wath of the waves. It only belongs to a few, if indeed the privilege is allowed to any, to say, that they have travelled through a period of successive years, undisturbed by tumult, from the envy of one, and the hatred of another. If any such do in reality exist, they may truly be said to enjoy, that which completes the extent of possible happiness in the present state.

At the period of the world, in which we now live, it seems as if men, either through frequent injuries from others, or consciousness of baseness in themselves, had learned to attribute default of principle, or absence of virtue, not partial-

arly to one, but universally, to the human race; to ascribe selfishness to benevolence, avarice to industry, and meanness to friendship. We are sufficiently aware, both of the general stupitude, & the general depravity of our fellows; but we would not darken our own prospects, by delusive imaginations, or wilful misunderstandings; we would not reduce ourselves to the lowly level of the cheerless misanthropist, who contemplates but one side of the picture, and that, the most unlovely in its appearance, the most ungainly in its aspect. We would discern, in our communion with men, between the gold of sterling value, and the baser alloy

that too often mingles with the precious material. we would not through caution deviate into morosenes, nor through fear of deception slide into apathy. To err, belongs to all; it is the lot of humanity, and each must accept his share; endure the misery with the joy, bear the toil with the pleasure.

do a consequence, then, of the gloomy principle which so generally pervades men, in their judgment of one another, the devotion of the friend, and the ardor of the lover, are construed into the submission of the slave, and the lust of the libertine; the disinterestedness of favor, into the calculations of policy, the activity of bounty, into the officiousness of ostentation.

We confine ourselves, in this paper, principally to friendship.

A ~~heavenly~~ plant of heavenly origin, its verdure is immortal, its beauty incomparable. It is too pure for so foul an atmosphere, as covers this degraded scene;- it withers by the pestiferous breath of earthly malice, and dies by the contaminating touch of worldly pollution. It requires a more exalted communion, than can be obtained in the vale of mortality, crowded with the demons of hatred, and darkened by the fiends of infernal discord. According to public estimation, those who league together in the bond of amity, must be united for purposes of blood; for conspirators against the general interest, diminishers of the public food, opposers of public

prosperity. To retire for a period from surrounding gaze, we must be knaves in principle, and robbers in practice. To be private, we must be insidious; to be choice in our intercourse, we must be sinister in our intentions.

It would be very well, if a little less attention was paid, to the cavils of the vulgar group. But alas! we can only lament the misfortune, and then tell the tale of sorrow. The friendships of by far the greatest part of men, are trellised by the fear of others, - snapped in the commencement by the dread of attack, & weakened in their maturity, by the prospect of danger. The affections, which should concentrate vigor for resistance, unnerves the faculties, and they sink, impairs the energies, and they die. The

first shout of alarm, the first outcry of hostility, dissipates intimacy, formed in love, and improved by years; the foundations of its strength are undermined, the superstructure totters, and all the stately fabric crumbles in the dust.

The separation which so often takes place, in most cases, doubtless proceeds, from mutual affection, and mutual benevolence. The one would shield the other, from the injuries which he cannot avert, and which prudence forbids to receive: he would provide happiness for himself, by the acquirement of safety for him, whose interest is his own, whose comfort his delight, whose enjoyment the full

measure of his bliss. He would hail, in the security which is found, the peace which seems so ready to his call, and in tranquility, find something to console for the loss, ~~and~~ ~~if~~ equally sheltering ~~it~~ both, from the abuses of a mass of beings, who would, if no power above them stayed their murderous dash, lay waste the fruitful places of the earth, devastate her palaces, ruin her glory, crush her great ones, and trample on her good.

Benevolus is warm in his affections, but cautious in his actions;- a faithful friend, but a prudent citizen. He is eager for private quiet, but he will not offend against public opinions. He

wishes, while he is tranquil in himself, to be at peace with the world; - to have no enemies, and all friends; or, at any rate, to experience such a state of life, that if he is not strenuously defended, he will not be openly defamed. For a long period of years, he has never attempted, because he has not desired, to be intimate with one; - he communicates with none, never is free with any, but is civil to all.

But this mode of life our friend did not pursue, till necessity, in his opinion, compelled him to adopt it. He had previously found, that the favor of the world, and the choice of a friend, were incompatible; that, owing to this, he had hitherto lived

with pain, and, if he lived to any longer, he should die unregretted. He parted from the object of his attachment, with much emotion, and with many tears; lamented his fate, but thought he could not prevent it; retired from scenes of publicity, and has since lived a solitary recluse.

Our reflecting readers will undoubtedly stop a moment, to consider the propriety of such a course. What did he lose, and what did he gain? He lost a friend. From what? From transient apprehension, and a mistaken feeling. He acquired universal neglect from the world, and he cannot be happy in himself. A little

consideration, added to his benevolence, would perhaps have taught him, that tho' friendship with a few may excite the envy of the many, yet the enjoyment of substantial blessing, is worth the price for which it is obtained.

Q.